

YOUTH SERVICES POLICY

Title: Violence-Free Workplace Next Annual Review Date: 05/02/2012	Type: A. Administrative Sub Type: 2. Personnel Number: A.2.22
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References: ACA Standards 2-CO-1C-01, 2-CO-1C-02, 2-CO-1C-04, 2-CO-1C-11, 2-CO-1C-25, 2-CO-1D-02, 2-CO-1D-03 (Administration of Correctional Agencies); 4-JCF-2A-19, 4-JCF-2A-30, 4-JCF-6D-01, 4-JCF-6D-04, 4-JCF-6D-08, 4-JCF-6E-02 (Performance-Based Standards for Juvenile Correctional Facilities); YS Policies A.1.4 "Investigative Services", A.2.1 "Employee Manual", A.2.8 "Sexual Harassment", A.2.11 "Employee Assistance Program," A.2.20 "Critical Incident Stress Management Program", A.2.24 "Staff Development and Training Plan", A.2.26 Hiring and/or Promotional Interviews", A.2.60 "Domestic Violence" A.7.1 "Safety Plan", C.1.3 "Crimes Committed on the Grounds of YS Facilities/Office Buildings and/or Properties", C.5.1 "Performance Data and Information", C.5.3 "Quality Assurance Reviews - Central Office Audits, Secure Facilities and Regional Offices"	
STATUS: Approved	
Approved By: Mary L. Livers, Deputy Secretary	Date of Approval: 05/02/2011

I. AUTHORITY:

Deputy Secretary of Youth Services as contained in La. R.S. 36:405. Deviation from this policy must be approved by the Deputy Secretary.

II. PURPOSE:

To promote a positive, respectful and safe work environment that fosters employees' productivity, safety and security.

To inform all employees of their responsibilities to keep our workplaces free of violence.

To set into place a plan for quickly responding to violence if it does occur.

III. APPLICABILITY:

This policy applies to all employees of Youth Services (YS). The Deputy Secretary, Assistant Secretary, Undersecretary, Chief of Operations, Deputy Assistant Secretaries, Facility Directors, and Regional Managers are responsible for implementation and monitoring of this policy.

IV. DEFINITIONS:

Assault - an attempt to commit a battery, or the intentional placing of another in reasonable apprehension of receiving a battery.

Battery - the intentional use of force or violence upon another; or the intentional administration of a poison or other noxious substance to another.

Credible Threat - a statement or action that would cause a reasonable person to fear for the safety of himself or that of another person and does, in fact, cause such fear.

Unit Head - Deputy Secretary, Assistant Secretary, Undersecretary, Chief of Operations, Deputy Assistant Secretaries, Facility Directors, and Regional Managers.

Unusual Occurrence Report (UOR) - a written report submitted by staff prior to the end of their tour of duty detailing any unusual circumstances.

Violence - the commission of an assault or battery or the making of a credible threat. In this context, an unwarranted exertion of force or power, including any intentional actions or words meant to embarrass, ridicule, degrade or provoke another that results in physical or emotional injury to that person or any verbal, physical, or psychological threat or assault on an individual intended to cause, or actually resulting in, physical and/or psychological damage is considered violence. Such behavior includes but is not limited to:

- Unwelcome name-calling, obscene language, and other abusive behavior.
- Intimidation through direct or veiled threats.
- Physically touching another individual in an intimidating, malicious, or sexually harassing manner.
- Physically intimidating others including such acts as obscene gestures, "getting in your face," fist-shaking, and throwing any object.

Workplace (or worksite) - any site where an employee is placed for the purpose of completing job assignments, inclusive of facilities surrounding properties and parking garages.

Workplace Violence - violence that takes place in or at the workplace. Workplace violence can be inflicted by an abusive employee, a manager, supervisor, co-worker, customer, family member, or even a stranger.

V. POLICY:

It is the Deputy Secretary's policy to achieve and maintain a violence-free workplace for YS employees and those conducting business at its worksites.

YS will take every reasonable step to create a safe and secure work environment free of violence, aggressive acts, verbal and non-verbal threatening behavior and harassment toward or by its employees or the public they serve.

Any employee who commits an act of workplace violence, makes a credible threat, or engages in assault or battery on another employee shall be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

VI. PROCEDURES:

A. Incident Response and Evaluation

1. All acts of violence should be taken seriously when committed. An employee is encouraged to report incidents whenever they feel threatened. Remember, for the purposes of this policy, a threat is an act of violence. An employee who has been threatened or assaulted by another at the workplace shall immediately report the situation to their immediate supervisor, if possible, or the Human Resources (HR) Director, Employee Assistance Program (EAP) Coordinator or Appointing Authority. The supervisor to whom the incident is reported shall immediately notify the HR Director, the EAP Coordinator or Appointing Authority. The supervisor is responsible for notifying the Unit Head, as soon as the situation allows.
2. At the time an act of violence occurs, the following guidelines should be followed by those witnessing the act or able to take action:
 - a. If the situation is not dangerous:
 - (1) Separate the individuals involved and isolate each until they are interviewed by Investigative Services (IS) and their statements are taken.
 - (2) Separate witnesses until they are interviewed by IS and their statements are taken.
 - (3) Document all actions and statements on a UOR **and** on a Workplace Violence / Domestic Violence Incident Report.
 - b. If the situation is dangerous:
 - (1) Contact your building security and if necessary, the Unit Head shall contact local law enforcement.
 - (2) Order all those presenting the danger to leave the facility immediately (unless this action must be taken by police/security).
 - (3) Do not attempt to physically remove an individual (leave it to the police/security).
 - (4) Document all actions and statements on a UOR **and** on a Workplace Violence / Domestic Violence Incident Report.
3. Assistance shall be provided by the EAP Coordinator for victimized employees, and employees who may be affected by witnessing a workplace violence incident. Whenever an incident takes place, injured employees shall receive appropriate medical treatment and psychological evaluation as necessary.

B. Communication

1. OJJ supports an open communication process among all employees on the issues of employee safety, security and health in the workplace. This process includes, but is not limited to:
 - a. periodic review of this policy with all employees;
 - b. discussions of violence prevention in the workplace during new hire orientation and scheduled in-service trainings.
 - c. posting or distributing information on preventing violence in the workplace; and
 - d. establishing procedures to inform supervisors about responding to violence in the workplace, hazards, or threats of violence.

All YS Supervisors, Facility Directors, and Regional Managers shall treat reports of workplace violence with sensitivity and discretion, and maintain confidentiality to the extent possible.

VII. RESPONSIBILITY:

- A. The Deputy Secretary, Assistant Secretary, Undersecretary, Chief of Operations, Deputy Assistant Secretaries, Unit Heads, Section Heads, and all supervisors are responsible for:
 - Holding YS employees under their supervision accountable for adhering to all aspects of this policy;
 - Ensuring that each employee under their supervision is made aware of this policy and its contents;
 - Complying with federal and state statutes, rules, regulations and/or guidelines regarding this policy;
 - Posting the local police and building security telephone numbers in an area that is accessible to employees in their section;
 - Promoting a safe and violence-free work environment, and reporting incidents that threaten an employee's safety to the HR Director, EAP Coordinator or the Appointing Authority; and
 - Treating workplace violence incidents, complaints and concerns seriously.

B. YS Employees are responsible for:

- Adhering to all aspects of this policy;
- Reporting to their immediate or on-site supervisor all threats or assaults made towards themselves by another individual at the workplace;
- Reporting to their immediate or on-site supervisor all incidents of violent or inappropriate behaviors in the workplace which they observe, or of which they are informed; and
- Writing an Unusual Occurrence Report documenting the incident.

C. The Employee Assistance Program Coordinator is responsible for:

- Ensuring that this policy and subsequent revisions are provided to section heads; and
- Keeping confidential all reports and the identification of parties, except to those who have a legitimate need to know and to the extent required by law;

D. IS is responsible for:

Performing investigations and assisting in training on this policy.

VIII. QUESTIONS:

Questions regarding this policy should be directed to the YS EAP Coordinator.

IX. VIOLATIONS:

Failure to comply with this policy shall result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

Previous Regulation/Policy Number: A.2.22

Previous Effective Date: 04/15/1998



Attachments/References: Workplace Violence - Domestic Violence Incident Report.docx



Unusual Occurrence Report (UOR).docx